

FROM AN IDEA TO ...

BARBIE



Comprehension & Teach-Back:

After reading **From an Idea to Barbie**, work with others who read the same book and answer these questions. After you're done, you will share your answers with the rest of the class and teach them what you learned.



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1. At the opening of the book, we meet Ruth Handler, the founder of Barbie. Ruth was raised by her older sister Sarah rather than her own mother. How did this upbringing shape the kind of leader and businesswoman she became?
2. Describe how Ruth's early job at her sister's store, Greenwald's Pharmacy & Soda Fountain, taught her what it took to be an entrepreneur.
3. Who was Izzy/Elliot Handler and what skills did he have?
4. How did Mattel get its name?

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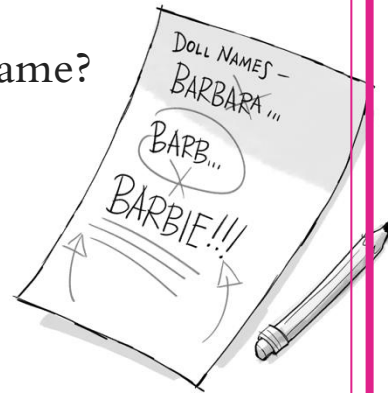
5. What inspired Ruth to imagine a three-dimensional adult doll? How did watching her daughter Barbara play with paper dolls play a role?
6. Why did Elliot and the other men at Mattel initially reject Ruth's doll idea?
7. What happened during the Handler family's 1956 trip to Switzerland, and how did it change the course of Barbie's creation?



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8. Describe the Five Steps Mattel used to create the Barbie doll.

9. How did Barbie get her name? What is Barbie's full name?



10. What happened when Barbie debuted at the 1959 New York Toy Fair?

11. How did market research help Mattel learn that girls loved Barbie even though toy buyers did not?

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12. Explain what “razor and blade” pricing strategy is. How did Mattel use it for Barbie and her clothes? Why was it so profitable?
13. Why did Mattel create Ken? What is Ken’s full name?
14. Who was Pleasant Rowland, and how did American Girl become Barbie’s biggest competitor?
15. What made the 2023 Barbie movie such a successful marketing strategy for Mattel?
16. How has Barbie’s list of careers changed since the 1960s?